



DELTA STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

A California State Agency

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Date: November 8, 2012
To: Delta Stewardship Council Members
From: Christopher Knopp, Executive Officer
Subject: Council Meeting on November 15, 2012

Chair
Phil Isenberg

Members
Randy Fiorini
Gloria Gray
Patrick Johnston
Hank Nordhoff
Don Nottoli

Executive Officer
Christopher M. Knopp

The November 15, 2012 Council meeting will be held at the West Sacramento City Hall Galleria, 1110 West Capitol Avenue, West Sacramento, CA 95691. The agenda and supporting materials for the meeting are attached. Some additional handouts may be provided at the meeting.

Presentation from San Francisco Estuary Institute on their Delta Historical Ecological Report (Agenda Item 6)

The San Francisco Estuary Institute, in collaboration with the Department of Fish and Game, has completed a historical ecology study of the Delta. The project improves understanding of what the Delta looked like and how it functioned prior to the significant modification that has occurred over the last 160 years.

The reconstruction documents patterns of variation and extent of habitat types throughout the Delta for improved understanding of species support functions and controlling physical processes within the native landscape. Knowing how different parts of the vast historical Delta looked and functioned provides needed information for future restoration strategies.

Given the extensive changes to the Delta, the objective is to understand how large-scale restoration can support an ecosystem in the future Delta that reflects functions to which native species are adapted. This involves recognizing physical gradients along which ecosystems can adapt as the Delta continues to change.

Delta Plan Interagency Implementation Committee (Agenda Item 7b)

The Delta Reform Act of 2009 directs the Delta Stewardship Council (DSC) to establish and oversee a committee of agencies responsible for implementing the Delta Plan. This "Implementation Committee" will be a multi-agency effort comprised of state, local and federal agencies that, with coordination from the DSC, will carry out the Delta Plan through their projects and programs. These tasks will include, but are not be limited to, monitoring the progress of priority actions, identifying funding needs to implement the Delta Plan, and assisting in the tracking of the Delta Plan performance measures.

"Coequal goals" means the two goals of providing a more reliable water supply for California and protecting, restoring, And enhancing the Delta ecosystem. The coequal goals shall be achieved in a manner that protects and enhances the unique cultural, recreational, natural resource, and agricultural values of the Delta as an evolving place."

– CA Water Code §85054

Continued Review and Potential Action on Near-Term Strategies of Implementation of the Delta Plan (Agenda Item 7c)

Any new water conveyance system in the Delta, if approved, may take more than a decade to construct. Yet, the reliability of the state's water supplies and the health of the Delta ecosystem will continue to decline. To achieve the coequal goals of the Delta Reform Act in a timely manner, the Delta Stewardship Council (DSC) would need to begin encouraging a number of strategies for implementation of the Delta Plan.

At the October 25, 2012 DSC meeting staff presented to the Council a set of 21 near-term strategies and sub-strategies essential to begin carrying out the Delta Plan. The Council then directed staff to provide a narrower selection of strategies, with justification for these choices. Those choices will be presented at the November 15, 2012 meeting.

Bay-Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP) EIR Review (Agenda Item 8a and b)

The BDCP and its draft EIR/EIS are expected to be released soon. Under the Delta Reform Act of 2009, the Delta Stewardship Council has three roles relative to the BDCP: 1) to provide advice on development of the BDCP to the Departments of Water Resources (DWR) and Fish and Game (DFG); 2) as a responsible agency in the development of the BDCP's Environmental Impact Report (EIR); and 3) appellate jurisdiction on whether the BDCP meets the requirements of the Reform Act. The Act also tasks the Delta Independent Science Board with reviewing the EIR and providing comments to the Council and the Department of Fish and Game. If the BDCP is successfully completed and approved, it will be incorporated into the Delta Plan.

Two reports propose how the staff suggests focusing Council and ISB's review of the BDCP and its EIR. The first outlines the framework for review of the BDCP and its EIR/EIS by the Council staff and its consultant, ARCADIS U.S. The second is a draft charge to the ISB outlining emphases for its review of the EIR/EIS. Coordinating these reviews can help the Council fulfill its responsibilities as a responsible agency in a timely and efficient manner.

Lead Scientist's Report (Agenda Item 9a)

Lead Scientist, Dr. Peter Goodwin, will discuss the ongoing planning and development of the Delta Science Plan. Early stages have included: 1) holding scoping meetings among Delta Science Program staff; 2) examining other science planning efforts; 3) meeting with the heads of other Bay-Delta resources agencies; 4) hosting a Town Hall Meeting at the recent Science Conference; 5) administering a survey on the Delta Science Program's website, and; 6) preparing a draft Delta Science Plan outline.

As always, time for public comment on these agenda items, as well as any item of relevance to the Council, will be available. If I can answer any questions or provide any information, please contact me at (916) 445-4500 or chris.knopp@deltacouncil.ca.gov